

# THE MEDALLION

## GALVESTON GOING STRONG

Island is Building Back  
its Historic Treasures

*Laura Bush*



Dear Friends,

The rich heritage of our state is one of the reasons George and I are so happy to be home. Historic preservation has an important place in Texas, and all across America. As our nation ages, more and more places are at risk of falling into disuse or being cleared to make way for new construction. Progress is healthy, but it should be coupled with respect for the places of our past.

Restoring and protecting grand old buildings and storied homes is one component of historic preservation. But preservation goes beyond bricks and mortar. Preservation builds community partnerships, bringing together governments, citizens, and businesses to celebrate the rich heritage of a community. And preservation educates a new generation about how people lived and played and worshiped in the past.

The Texas Historical Commission plays a vital role in preserving and saving the vibrant history of the Lone Star State. I'm grateful for my fellow citizens of Texas and local leaders for sustaining THC and urge continued strong support.

Sincerely,

*Laura Bush*

## Banking on the Bankhead

### Classic Cross-Texas Roadway is Vehicle for Proposed Historic Highways Program

In the 1940s and '50s, classic roadways such as Route 66 and the Bankhead Highway were major arteries through Texas, forever altering the development and cultural heritage of the Lone Star State. Decades later, Texas' landscape changed with the introduction of interstates that bypassed Main Street communities. However, vestiges of the forgotten highways are still visible today, and efforts are currently underway to identify, designate, and promote these historically significant roads.

Rep. Carol Kent of Dallas authored two house bills during the 81st Texas Legislature that established a program for the identification, designation, interpretation, and marketing of Texas' historic roads and highways (the Bankhead Highway, in particular). A partnership between the Texas Historical Commission (THC) and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is expected to result in research, preservation, and economic development through heritage tourism dollars, providing a vehicle for new job creation in the state.

The Texas Historic Roads and Highways Program, dependent on matching funds from the 82nd Texas Legislature currently in session, would enable the THC to prepare a historic context for Texas highways, a survey of historic resources along the Bankhead Highway corridor, and a Bankhead Highway travel guide.

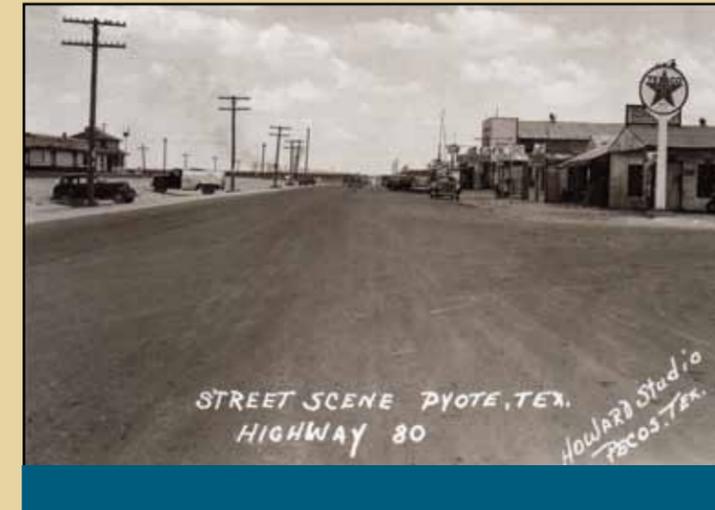
"This project would be a great benefit to Texas' rural and economically disadvantaged areas and increase marketing opportunities for expanding tourism statewide," says Terry Colley, the THC's deputy executive director.

"We expect a positive impact on the urban and rural communities in the counties (almost 50) along the Bankhead Highway route."

The Bankhead Highway—a trans-continental roadway running from Washington, D.C. to San Diego—had three routes in Texas, two of which connected Texarkana to El Paso and are roughly represented by current Interstates 20 and 30.

The original routes played important roles in the development of Texas by providing corridors for transportation, commerce, and tourism.

The Bankhead's legacy in Texas is immense, providing a scenic system for cross-country travelers to experience the real places and real stories of the Lone Star State. According to a report compiled by historical researcher Jerry Flook of Garland, the first auto excursion in Texas is widely believed to have taken place in October 1899 on a rutted dirt road that eventually became part of the Bankhead Highway between Terrell and Dallas. In 1916, the Bankhead Highway Association was formed (named for Alabama Sen. John Hollis Bankhead, the "father of good roads") and in 1920, Texas State Highway 1 from Texarkana to El Paso officially become part of the project. Flook notes the impact on Garland was significant, with 75 percent of drivers stopping on



The Bankhead Highway traversed Texas' rural communities, including Pyote in Far West Texas (photo courtesy Dan Smith).

the town square for service, drinks, and food. With the 1956 passage of the Interstate Highway Act, however, drivers soon opted for wider, safer, and faster new interstates, which typically bypassed small-town main streets. The THC and its partners hope the Historic Highways Program will rejuvenate interest in these historic roadways.

"Communities along the route will benefit from a new appreciation of regional history, facilitated economic development planning, and resources to attract heritage travelers," Colley says. "Identifying historic sites and structures along the corridor will also help preserve them for future generations and create an important link between the transportation corridors of prior generations and today's modern highway systems." ★

This article was written by Andy Rhodes, managing editor of The Medallion.

# Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program Reinvests in Local Communities

Driving the highways of Texas, you can't help but notice them. Their lofty gothic spires, classical copper domes, and stately silhouettes dominate the skylines of many counties, luring travelers to leave the interstate and explore the charm of downtown. Historic courthouses are a county's personal brand, advertising the promise not only of a nostalgic return to the hometown of our childhood memories, but also the opportunity to visit a place defined by family-owned businesses, vibrant social gatherings, and a sense of community. In short, courthouses are the centerpiece of a growing economic boon to their counties.

The State of Texas, through the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program, is reinvesting in small towns across Texas at a time when they need it the most. The current economic recession has taken a heavy toll on small towns and their residents. In this time of economic duress, Texas is providing a cost-effective example to the nation on how to refocus community pride, utilize existing assets, and maximize the return on historic civic buildings in its county seats.

The THC plays a key role in the process through its Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program. The agency submitted an exceptional item request to the 82nd regular session of the Texas Legislature for \$20 million in funding for the program, the same amount appropriated in the preceding biennium. "The Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program makes even more sense in tough economic times," said Program Director Stan Graves. "It plants the seed for recovery in communities across Texas."

In the first six rounds of the program, the THC received 138 courthouse master plans, the first step required in the assistance process. Of those 138 plans, 127 were approved. At

this time, 72 counties still need program funding. Twenty-seven of these have received either partial construction or planning grants, and 46 counties with approved master plans have yet to receive any program funding (many have applied in four or more rounds). A total of \$227 million has

been distributed between 2000–2010 through five biennial appropriations of as high as \$62 million, with an average of \$40 to \$50 million per biennium.

"The estimated current need to restore all remaining courthouses that have approved master plans is approximately \$250 million in state funds," said Graves. "Those funds would be matched, in part, by local dollars creating jobs and stimulating adjacent businesses."



*The Maverick County Courthouse in Eagle Pass (above) and Lavaca County Courthouse in Hallettsville (below) have benefited from participating in the THC's Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program. Both are prominent structures in their communities, drawing tenants, tourists, and related business investments to their downtown districts.*

The most recent funding for Round VI of the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program was included in the appropriations bill of the 81st Legislature in 2009, approving the sale of \$20 million in bonds, the smallest amount appropriated for the program since its inception. Subsequently, a total of 44 applications were received requesting more than \$173 million in state assistance. In January 2010, 20 projects were selected to receive grants. Three full restorations, three exterior phased projects, four emergency projects, and 10 planning grants were awarded.

"The Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program has experienced some challenges during the economic



downturn, but we're still trying to make the most of what we have," Graves said. "We believe the program has not merely been an investment in our past, but is an investment in our future."

Two groups of graduate students at Texas A&M University are currently researching the metrics of preservation economics in Lampasas and Wharton counties, both of which have restored their historic county courthouses through the THC program. Student teams are interviewing civic,

community, and business leaders and collecting data for research and analysis. A final report detailing the economic, environmental, social, and visual dividends accrued from the restoration projects in both counties will be made available to the public through the THC.

Preliminary findings indicate the courthouse restorations in both communities have served to stabilize and enhance tenant demand for real estate in the vicinity of the courthouses, and property values have increased. Additionally, the restoration of these two historic buildings, as opposed to demolition or relocation, represents a tangible commitment by the state to both the community and sustainable development in Texas.

This investment is represented in the 138 courthouse grants that have been awarded to 82 Texas counties over the last decade. To date, 42 courthouses have been fully restored and by the end of 2011, the rededication of 10 more historic courthouses will be celebrated. According to Graves, a \$20 million general revenue appropriation extended over two years (fiscal year 2012–13) would complete the restoration of approximately five additional courthouses. Of these projects, it is likely three would be second-phase interior projects to follow their exterior restorations and the other two selected would have previously received a planning grant.

"This request is less than in our earlier rounds, but is the same amount we received last session," said Graves. "Because of the state's economic and budget woes we felt compelled to request no more than we received last time, knowing that it won't address more than a fraction of the need, but it will certainly keep the program alive and viable into the future."



*Stunning architectural detailing featured in the prominent towers of the Harrison County Courthouse in Marshall (above) and Denton County Courthouse in Denton (below) are enhanced through the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program.*

Graves adds that courthouse preservation projects help create a business-friendly environment through improvements to infrastructure, such as enhanced parking and traffic flow, increased pedestrian accessibility, expanded event hosting capabilities, and the development of a unique and inviting historic context or "sense of place" centered upon the restored courthouse. They promote increased visitation to the downtown business community by hosting events and encouraging heritage tourism, in addition to creating a secure and inviting environment that entices courthouse visitors to stay and explore the square.

The Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program can be the catalyst that encourages additional public and private investment in the historic downtown. There are often vacant buildings in the central commercial district when a courthouse project begins, but vacancies dwindle by the project's completion.

"The preservation of Texas' historic courthouses is an investment that offers immediate returns, yet continues to pay generous dividends to the citizens of tomorrow," Graves said. ★

*This article was written by Mark Cowan and Sharon Fleming of the THC's Architecture Division.*

# Let Freedom Ring

## Resounding Legacy of African Americans in Texas

### Is the Subject of a New THC Booklet and Website

Buffalo Soldiers. Black Seminole Scouts. Civil Rights leaders. Educators. Spiritual advisers. Cowboys and ranchers. Farmers. Legislators. Music legends. Sports champions. The Great Debaters. A pioneering female pilot. These and countless more African Americans in Texas left behind the rich and fascinating heritage that is the subject of the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) latest educational travel guide, *African Americans in Texas: A Lasting Legacy*.

The 72-page booklet is the largest travel guide produced by the THC, with 79 entries on sites of cultural or historical importance, a chronological introduction to African American

history, a timeline of key dates and figures, and nine thematic sidebars. Organized by the 10 heritage regions comprising the THC's Texas Heritage Trails Program, the booklet highlights famous and lesser-known sites in urban and rural locales throughout the state. The concept development and content were guided by an advisory committee made up of esteemed scholars of African American history in Texas, as well as THC staff members.

In addition to the printed piece, the THC launched its first-ever online companion guide, [www.africanamericansintexas.com](http://www.africanamericansintexas.com). The website features approximately 100 more sites than the booklet, a gallery containing stunning imagery photographed specifically for the project, and additional resources that encourage further exploration.

"We're very excited to feature other sites that were considered for the print booklet but weren't included due to space constraints," said THC Deputy Executive Director Terry Colley. "Even with the additional sites on the new website, these resources provide only a glimpse into this intriguing and enduring history. We hope people will be inspired to delve deeper into this significant aspect of our state's heritage."

The booklet and website were launched on December 2 at a commemorative event

at St. Paul United Methodist Church in Dallas, one of the publication's featured sites. To request a free copy of the booklet, visit [www.africanamericansintexas.com](http://www.africanamericansintexas.com) or call 866.276.6219.

The following excerpts from *African Americans in Texas: A Lasting Legacy* exemplify the statewide journey through this diverse and vibrant heritage.

#### A.C. MCMILLAN AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM, EMORY

Alfred Clifton McMillan was a notable teacher and administrator in Rains County for 36 years. He received degrees from Texas College and East Texas State University, spent much of his career as a teacher and principal of Sand Flat School (a Rosenwald school that the McMillan Museum is active in preserving) and, later, was principal of Rains County Junior High School. His family has been central to the effort to tell the story of African Americans in this part of northeast Texas. The museum has exhibits and artifacts on Reconstruction in Texas, Rosenwald schools, sports and art, and its collection is built largely from artifacts donated by the community.

#### CONNELLY-YERWOOD HOUSE, AUSTIN

This house was purchased in 1925 by Dr. Charles Yerwood, an African American physician. Later, his daughter, Dr. Connie Yerwood Conner, took ownership, resided in the house and painted it the pink and aqua colors of her sorority, Alpha Kappa Alpha, the oldest Greek-letter society established by African American women. Following in her father's footsteps,



Texas' rich legacy of African American heritage is represented in diverse structures throughout the state, including (clockwise from above) Fort Ringgold in Rio Grande City, the Connelly-Yerwood House in Austin, and Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts in Dallas.

Conner worked for the state's Department of Health where, despite facing discrimination both as an African American and as a woman, she eventually rose to the position of Chief of the Bureau of Personal Health Services. Conner paid special attention to the problem of child and infant mortality in Texas, which she addressed through programs aimed at training midwives, providing prenatal care, and expanding child immunization.

#### STUBB'S MEMORIAL, LUBBOCK

Christopher B. Stubblefield was born in Navasota, and his family moved to Lubbock in the 1930s to pick cotton. "Stubb" learned to cook in local establishments and, later, oversaw daily meal preparations for as many as 10,000 soldiers as a staff sergeant during the Korean War. In 1968, he opened a barbecue restaurant that became a center of Lubbock's music scene, attracting regular performers such as Joe Ely, Jimmie Dale Gilmore, and Stevie Ray Vaughan. The restaurant burned in the 1980s, and Stubb moved it to Austin, where it continues to be a mainstay of food and live music. Stubblefield died in 1995, and a memorial statue was erected in 1999 on the site of the original Stubb's



students aspiring to future careers in the performing and visual arts.

#### FORT RINGGOLD, RIO GRANDE CITY

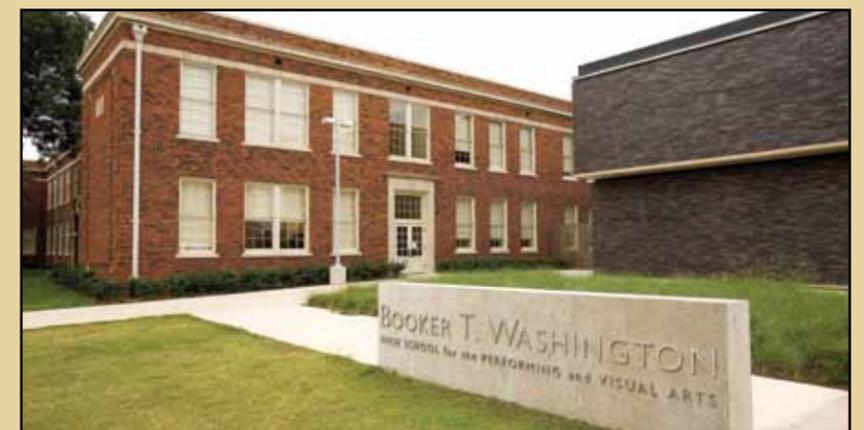
Established during the U.S.-Mexico War, this fort became the site of a racial confrontation in 1899. Buffalo Soldiers of the 9th U.S. Cavalry, fresh from victories in Cuba during the Spanish-American War, came to Fort Ringgold refusing to tolerate racial segregation in the local community and harassment by its civilian population. Tensions between the troops and local residents resulted in a disturbance on the night of November 20, when Lt. E.H. Rubottom ordered his men to open fire with their Gatling guns. One person was injured and, although official investigations into the incident did not result in any charges, the U.S. Army relocated the Buffalo Soldiers to avoid further conflict. Today, the remaining buildings of the fort belong to the local school district and are still in use. ★

Bar-B-Que. The site still features concerts and musical fundraisers.

#### BOOKER T. WASHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL FOR THE PERFORMING AND VISUAL ARTS, DALLAS

Constructed in 1922, Booker T. Washington High School replaced the older Dallas Colored High School. The student body traces its origins to 1892, when the Dallas Board of Education created the segregated city's first African American high school. During its first 17 years of operation, the often-overcrowded school served every African American student in Dallas County. In 1976, facing court-ordered desegregation, the Dallas Independent School District redesignated Booker T. Washington as a magnet school for artistically gifted

This article (minus excerpts) was written by Rob Hodges of the THC's Marketing Communications Division.



The THC's new booklet features Texas' Buffalo Soldier regiments, represented (above) by a reenactor at Abilene's Fort Phantom Hill and (at right) a medal of honor at Brackettville's Fort Clark.

# GOING STRONG

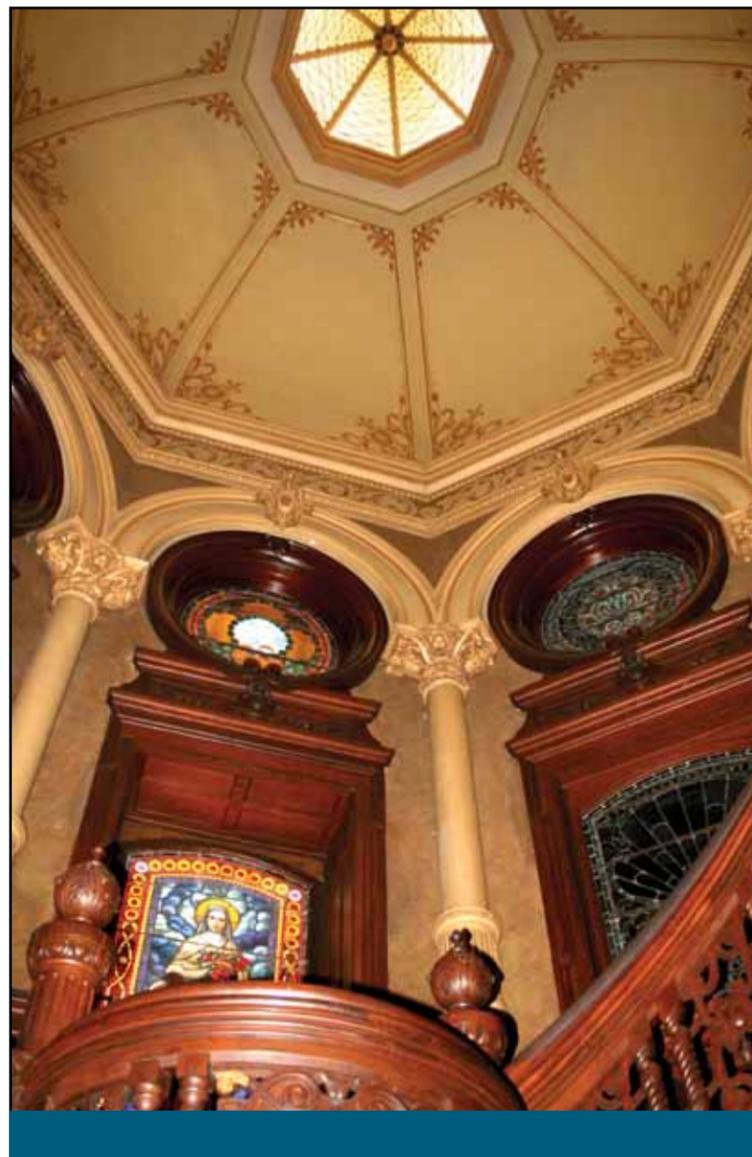
## Two Years after Hurricane Ike, Galveston Island is on the Road to Recovery

On September 13, 2008, Hurricane Ike slammed into Galveston Island's gulf shore, bringing images of destruction and devastation to the rest of Texas and the world. Thirteen feet of water submerged the historic downtown Strand District, hundreds of boats littered the island's fractured roads, and nearby neighborhoods were decimated by the storm.

More than two years have passed since video footage and photographs of these scenes reached the public, yet their powerful imagery resonates. Visitors still ask about the status of Galveston's abundant heritage attractions, and Hurricane Ike water-line markers have been placed throughout town to help guests gauge the severity of the storm's impact. According to local preservationists, the news from Galveston is primarily positive these days. The city recovered from the storm sooner than expected and even came away with valuable lessons learned.

"People are usually surprised to find out how quickly we returned from Ike—they still have images in their heads of boats in the streets and flooded buildings," says Dwayne Jones, executive director of the Galveston Historical Foundation (GHF). "Fortunately, there's been a lot of reinvestment here, especially in our historic district properties. Since a lot of damage was on the interior of these structures, you can't always tell what was affected. As soon as you step inside some of these buildings, though, you can see recovery is still occasionally ongoing."

Indeed, a glance inside the 1859 Ashton Villa residence reveals water lines on the walls, damage to a historic mirror, and a floor restoration project in one of the stately rooms. Another area of the mansion is slated for a major floor replacement project. One of the island's most notable losses was the gulfside Balinese Room, a 1940s-era nightclub



Galveston's most-visited historical attraction, Bishop's Palace, was largely unaffected by the storm.

on a pier that once hosted legendary performers such as Frank Sinatra, Bob Hope, and Duke Ellington.

According to Jones, Hurricane Ike's wrath was perhaps most significant in unexpected areas. He says the primary visible loss was the historic oak trees—most were planted after the 1900 storm—which added to the character of the island's historic districts by providing a connecting canopy among the homes, sidewalks, and streets. The combination of the storm water (with its salt, petroleum, and sewage) and an existing drought resulted in weakened trees, which fell on homes, streets, and cars. Dozens of flat stumps now occupy yards where mighty oaks once stood.

Jones says another Ike-related loss was Galveston's noteworthy historic ironwork. The city's cast-iron architecture was recognized as a significant aspect of its

National Register districts and was even placed on the National Trust for Historic Preservation's 2009 list of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places. Jones says the iron has an especially strong impact on historic structures because it expands and contracts, affecting the integrity of the accompanying building material.

He adds that although Hurricane Ike had a significant impact on Galveston Island's 20,000-plus historic properties, local preservationists have learned important lessons regarding future hurricane preparation. GHF's plans will continue to emphasize boarding up windows, securing appropriate shutters, weatherproofing additional exterior elements, and prioritizing important files and furniture to be moved to upper floors. The group has also made adjustments to its plans by implementing appropriate preparation levels as soon as a storm enters the gulf instead of waiting to gauge its projected path.

According to Jones, GHF also learned valuable lessons from Ike about which elements of historic buildings were most affected by prolonged exposure to standing water and how they can be responsibly addressed in the future. For example, he points to the high percentage of damaged heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, most of which were located at ground level and rendered completely inoperable after several days of being submerged in seawater.

"We're looking at ways to get these things off the ground and incorporate them into historic buildings in an environmentally responsible way," Jones says, noting that GHF's Green Revival Show House (an 1890 cottage at 3101 Avenue Q) showcases these types of plans. "Storms like Ike are always going to be a threat on the island, so we're making evaluations now about how to make sustainable decisions for future occurrences."

Other heritage-related businesses in Galveston are also making alterations to their future hurricane plans. One of the city's most popular cultural attractions, the Lone Star Flight Museum, experienced significant losses, from historic aircraft to vintage vehicles to hall-of-fame memorabilia items. Museum Director Larry Gregory says the aircraft, most of which are operable and available for guest flights, will be flown off the island even earlier than before, and items under

repair or not operable can be moved by truck with enough preparation time.

"There were several aircraft left behind that we couldn't move and artifacts from our hall of fame that didn't survive the storm—these were irreplaceable items," Gregory says. "I can tell you that when we returned a few days later to all the wreckage, it was completely devastating for us. It felt like someone knocking you in the gut."

He adds that spirits were raised after a strong initial clean-up and restoration response from the U.S. Navy and community volunteers. The key was re-opening the museum as soon as possible (January 31, 2009) and offering the museum's signature flight experiences on World War II-era aircraft.

"The rides have picked up a bit (in 2010), but visitation is still down slightly from the pre-storm days," Gregory says. "We're just trying to make the best of it."



At left: The Galveston Historical Foundation's Green Revival Show House in the historic East End district is a model for sustainable residential renovation following Hurricane Ike-related damage. Above: The 1859 Ashton Villa is still undergoing storm repairs.

## GALLIVANTING IN GALVESTON

Museum staffers and preservationists claim the island's cultural attractions re-opened much sooner than expected after Ike. Representatives from tourist destinations throughout town offer similar accounts, noting that they still receive frequent calls from people inquiring about storm damage and site accessibility.

The following brief overviews of Galveston's premier historical sites include storm-related reports, along with a

summary of their significance as destinations for heritage travelers from across the country.

### BISHOP'S PALACE

This stunning 1892 mansion—the most-visited historic attraction in Galveston—sustained little damage from Hurricane Ike, much like it avoided the wrath of the island's catastrophic 1900 hurricane. According to Jones, several windows were broken and the home was flooded on the bottom floor, which affected the walls but did not cause permanent structural damage.

A National Historic Landmark, Bishop's Palace is also listed in the National Register of Historic Places and is considered one of the country's most significant examples of a Victorian residence. Boasting a dramatic turret on the southeast corner, the mansion features an exquisite interior, with marble columns, 14-foot ceilings, an octagonal mahogany stairwell, spectacular stained glass, woodcarvings, and decorative plaster ceilings and walls. Bishop's Palace is open to the public for several tours throughout the week offering varying degrees of access to the rooms.  
[www.galvestonhistory.org](http://www.galvestonhistory.org) or call 409.762.2475



### THE ELISSA

Galveston's remarkable 1877 tall ship emerged in remarkably good shape following Hurricane Ike. Anchored to the harbor floor with large steel pipes, the vessel lost several sails but otherwise was unharmed, prompting Jones to muse that he "may consider taking refuge in the *Elissa* next time there's a big storm since she weathered Ike better than anything else in town."

As a British cargo ship, *Elissa* specialized in voyages to smaller ports of the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico, and she twice

loaded cotton at Galveston. This local connection prompted the GHF to purchase the ship and undertake a dramatic restoration in 1982. *Elissa* remains a fully functional vessel that continues to sail occasionally, and thousands of visitors board the decks of this floating National Historic Landmark, also designated one of America's Treasures by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

"More than a century ago, her cargo was bananas and produce, but these days she carries an even more important cargo—education and history," says James White, director of the adjacent Texas Seaport Museum.

### TEXAS SEAPORT MUSEUM

Ike caused fairly serious damage to *Elissa's* home berth, destroying the wooden workshops used for ship maintenance and damaging the brick and wooden pier. However, the nearby building housing the museum was unharmed.

The museum tells the story of *Elissa's* rescue from the scrap yard and her meticulous restoration through an engaging video documentary and intriguing artifacts.

Located at Pier 22 in the historic port of Galveston, the museum also showcases the legacy of maritime commerce and immigration. Another popular museum attraction is its database exhibit, allowing visitors to search the names of more than 133,000 immigrants who entered the country through Galveston, once known as the Ellis Island of the West.

[www.galvestonhistory.org](http://www.galvestonhistory.org) or call 409.763.1877

### ASHTON VILLA

The famous 1859 Italianate mansion received fairly significant storm-related water and mold damage on its interior (floors and walls) as well as its exterior, particularly the historic ironwork. GHF is working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on replacing portions of the mansion's flooring and HVAC system; as a result, it is closed for public tours yet offers facility rental in a limited capacity. Ashton Villa's carriage house remains open as a visitor's center, offering publications and personal advice about the island's cultural attractions.

Known as the first of Galveston's great Broadway Street mansions, Ashton Villa is also reported to be the legendary

site of Union Gen. Gordon Granger's reading of the Emancipation Proclamation on June 19, 1865. The elaborate residence was originally home to James Moreau Brown, who ran a successful Galveston hardware business, and was eventually sold to the Shriners before being acquired by GHF in 1974.  
[www.galvestonhistory.org](http://www.galvestonhistory.org) or call 409.762.3933

### MOODY MANSION

The massive 1895 mansion had several feet of standing water on its ground floor following Hurricane Ike. As a result, the exhibit area and the gift shop were destroyed, and the mansion's reception room cornice over the fireplace was damaged.

Located on Broadway Street near Ashton Villa and Bishop's Palace, this 28,000-square foot, 32-room mansion was purchased by financial magnate William Moody immediately following the 1900 storm, reportedly for "ten cents on the dollar." The limestone and brick structure features distinct styles in each room, many of which contain



causing extensive operational damage (HVAC system, mechanical equipment) and resulting in the loss of many permanent records.

The structure's extensive use of cast iron was considered revolutionary at the time of construction, and the building went on to become a courthouse and offices for federal agencies throughout the 20th century. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the U.S. Custom House now provides public access to the city's architectural history through GHF services such as historic property research and technical rehabilitation guidance.

[www.galvestonhistory.org](http://www.galvestonhistory.org) or call 409.765.7834

### THE STRAND

Standing water was the primary issue in the Strand Mechanic National Historic Landmark District, Galveston's downtown business center in the prosperous late-1800s and early 1900s. Some of the historic iron architecture was affected, and there was substantial flooding-related loss, including ground floor damage and inventory destruction. It continues to house shops, restaurants, and galleries and host annual events such as Dickens on the Strand and Mardi Gras.

### LONE STAR FLIGHT MUSEUM

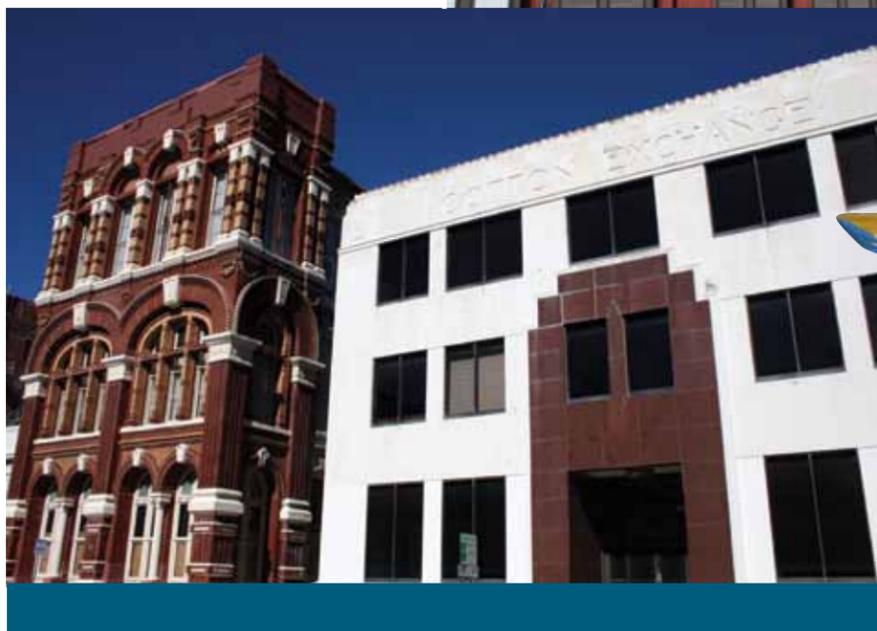
Located on the island's west end, the museum experienced significant damage and losses from Ike, but it has recovered thanks in large part to its flight program. Director Larry Gregory reports that new and returning visitors marvel at the collection of vintage warbirds in the museum's impressive

collection, including a rare operational SBD Dauntless, a popular AT-6/SNJ Texan trainer aircraft, and a mighty B-17 Flying Fortress. Gregory is especially grateful for the World War II veterans who continue to visit and fly the aircraft they once piloted more than 65 years ago.

"They always tell me it feels the same, looks the same, smells the same—everything is exactly how they remember it, other than the fact they're not getting shot at," Gregory says. "I ask them afterward what it's like to get back in the cockpit after 60-plus years, and the genuine smiles on their faces tell the whole story."

[www.lsfm.org](http://www.lsfm.org) or call 409.740.7722

For additional information about heritage tourism destinations in the area, order a free copy of the Texas Historical Commission's *Texas Independence Trail Region* travel guide by calling 866.276.6219 or visiting [www.thc.state.tx.us](http://www.thc.state.tx.us). ★



Above and left: The city's Strand National Historic Landmark District fared relatively well following Hurricane Ike despite damage to some buildings' exterior ironwork and interior walls. Above: this AT-6/SNJ Texan trainer aircraft still takes to the skies from the Lone Star Flight Museum, though other aircraft did not survive the storm.



hand-carved woodwork, coffered ceilings, family heirlooms, opulent furnishings, and stained glass. The mansion is open for daily tours and is often rented for reunions, weddings, and special events.

[www.moodymansion.org](http://www.moodymansion.org) or call 409.762.7668

### U.S. CUSTOM HOUSE

This stately 1861 building, which serves as GHF's headquarters, was flooded by up to eight feet of water,

# Lift Every Voice

## Bull Hill Cemetery Marker Dedication Honors Forgotten African American Ancestors

Families, friends, and neighbors from across the state celebrated the dedication of Bull Hill Cemetery and the unveiling of its Official Texas Historical Marker last summer. Nearly 200 people attended the dedication to honor the long-forgotten African American cemetery in Falls County near Marlin and to reconnect with old acquaintances.

Cousins William Broadus and Ray Hurd spent their childhood in Marlin but had not seen one another in 44 years. Both returned to pay homage to their common ancestors resting in Bull Hill. Hurd brought his daughter Jayda to experience family history, noting, “I want her to see where she came from, to know more about her great-great-grandmother Pearl Sneed Paul. (I want her to learn) about the slaves and everything they went through to get where we are now.”

Christopher Jones and Courtney Jones Keady, the great-great-grandchildren of the original land and slave owner Churchill Jones, echoed these sentiments. They discussed their childhood on the land encompassing Bull Hill, which is now owned by the Summerlee Foundation. Although the homecoming was bittersweet, the Jones descendants expressed confidence the property would be well preserved.

Many in the crowd were descended from the Jones, Tomlinson, and Stallworth slave-owning families and the enslaved African Americans who came with them from Alabama in the mid-1800s. It was virtually impossible for either group to tell their history without including the other, and for several hours both groups shared food and memories of bygone days.

Toni Anderson Kirk of Fort Worth said, “I thought that was big of them (the Jones descendants) to come and speak. Everyone seemed receptive of them.” Harrell Williams of Austin agreed, adding, “The more powerful story for me was the descendants of the slave owners who were there with the descendants of the slaves. That was a mark of how far we’ve come. Standing on the same ground under different circumstances and enjoying one another. That was a beautiful situation.”

Gary Bledsoe, president of the Texas chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, joined family and community members to recognize his deep familial roots to Bull Hill and the nearby China Grove community. One of six local and state dignitaries offering remarks at the dedication ceremony, Bledsoe asked the crowd to remember the sacrifices of those resting in Bull Hill. He recalled the last Bull Hill burial was in 1961, a significant year in many ways. Bledsoe noted that President Barack Obama was born in 1961, John F. Kennedy was sworn in as president, and the Civil Rights movement was gaining momentum.

His remarks placed the history and closure of Bull Hill in the midst of major political and social change and epitomized the hallowed nature of the cemetery.

Two of the area’s most prominent African American groups—the Hopeful Masonic Lodge No. 78 and the Order of the Eastern Star’s (OES) Peace Chapter 232—also participated in the event. Many of those buried in Bull Hill were lifelong members of these organizations. Helen Woodson, Worthy Matron of the OES, remarked, “I just keep thinking, these are our people.” She led the Eastern Star women in a remembrance of their departed sisters with the placement of a single white rose. Ronnie Jones, District Special Deputy of the Hopeful Masonic Lodge No. 78, read a resolution saluting the group’s brethren with words of thanks for their service.

Sharon Styles, descendant of the Paul, Sneed, Bailey, and Johnson families of the China Grove community, along with Nedra Lee, doctoral student of anthropology at the University of Texas at Austin, began planning the ceremony in February 2010. Many Marlin residents helped them throughout the process, including Hilda Blann and Trudie Lee Asbury of the Falls County Historical Commission, who worked with Styles and Lee for nearly four months to organize the ceremony.

The surviving kin of those buried in the Bull Hill Cemetery also were given an opportunity to honor the memories of their loved ones by participating in the dedication program. Minister Sanford Paul, Jr. offered the opening prayer and Rev. Will Miller, Jr. provided the closing



Opposite page: Members of the 62nd Expeditionary Signal Battalion of Fort Hood participated in the Bull Hill Cemetery ceremony last summer. Also taking part in the memorable event were (above) members of Marlin’s Hopeful Masonic Lodge No. 78 Prince Hall Affiliation.

prayer of dedication. Vocalists Alma Calloway, Shirley Hawkins, and Carlene Mack sang “Precious Lord” and “Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah,” the latter involving forms of call and response—a bedrock of the African American church. Both songs invoked the crowd to remember the pains of slavery and the trials and tribulations of obtaining freedom.

The dedication program was a culmination of roughly three years of research and preservation efforts spearheaded by the Summerlee Foundation and the Texas Historical Commission (THC). In 2007, the Dallas-based Summerlee Foundation purchased the 400-acre site that includes Bull Hill, and its president John Crain (also a THC commissioner) provided funding to support the rescue and preservation efforts at Bull Hill.

Lee and Jim Bruseth, director of the THC’s Archeology Division, worked closely with Styles to use archeological, genealogical, and oral history research to recover the names of 106 individuals buried in Bull Hill and to highlight the history of the China Grove community.

Styles gratefully acknowledged the support offered by Bruseth, Crain, and

Lee by saying, “I shall never forget their kindness, enthusiasm, and desire to shine a light on this forgotten burial ground that contains so many of my ancestors. They have been a blessing to me and my entire family for generations to come.”

“The more powerful story for me was the descendants of the slave owners who were there with the descendants of the slaves. That was a mark of how far we’ve come. Standing on the same ground under different circumstances and enjoying one another. That was a beautiful situation.”

— Harrell Williams  
Event Participant

The real stories of Bull Hill and China Grove will be celebrated in perpetuity on two historical markers—a THC marker with the history of this Historic Texas Cemetery, and a second marker listing the known names of the interred. THC Vice Chairman David Gravelle and the agency’s Executive Director Mark Wolfe attended the ceremony with other staff members who contributed to the burial ground’s preservation.

The program’s theme—to speak the names of the deceased so they could live again—was particularly meaningful to friends and family members who had been excluded from the cemetery for nearly half a century. With merely seven intact headstones remaining at Bull Hill, a marker lists the 106 known names and acknowledges the unknown.

Styles felt strongly that the names of all 106 identified people should be read aloud. She helped read these names as Calloway, Hawkins, and Mack sang softly alongside members of the Masons and Eastern Stars.

“I am truly grateful to everyone at the THC, the citizens of Marlin, and everyone that took time from their busy schedules to attend the dedication ceremony,” Styles said. “Most of all, I thank God for the opportunity to be a part of an

event that brought so many people together. I believe God gave me this assignment, and I did my best to complete it in a way that would be pleasing to Him and those resting in Bull Hill.” ★

This article was adapted from a report by Sharon Styles and Nedra Lee.



## Weeping Mary Carries On in East Texas

When he saw two elderly women descending their porch, shaking their fingers at him as he strolled into the small community, Norris White thought he must have done something wrong.

“I didn’t know what I had done,” said the Texas Historical Commission’s (THC) 2010 Preservation Fellow, “but I saw them coming at me and was sure I was in trouble.”

One month earlier—during his internship at Caddo Mounds State Historic Site in Alto—White had learned about the adjacent African American community of Weeping Mary. He had printed the THC’s 1998 brochure *African Americans in Texas: Historical & Cultural Legacies*, walked to the village after work, introduced himself to some residents, and distributed copies of the brochure. The visit went well, and he had looked forward to returning.

It was during his second visit to Weeping Mary that White thought he was being admonished. Vertie Martin and Ellie Mumphrey demanded to know where he obtained the brochure, and he sheepishly responded that it was from a state agency’s website. As it turned out, the women were not upset, but overjoyed—a photo of an unidentified woman on page 6 portrayed their “Aunt Mae,” a deceased community pillar of whom no other photo is known to exist. White instantly became a community hero.

Founded after the Civil War, Weeping Mary is tucked away in the woods about six miles southwest of Alto. The subject of a 2009 THC historical marker for untold stories, Weeping Mary has a mystique associated with its name and origins. It was founded by two sisters—Nancy (Ross) Lockhart and Emily (Ross) Skinner—on land purchased when they were freed from slavery. The matriarchal town could have been named after Mary Magdalene, though local legend says the namesake was a freed slave named Mary who was swindled of her land.

Today, Weeping Mary’s population is estimated at nearly 75, as young people have moved away in search of opportunity. But those remaining cling to tradition, a strong sense of community, and a proud, agrarian legacy. Weeping Mary Baptist Church continues to anchor the community, and the one-room schoolhouse (closed since World War II) still stands as testimony of the enduring communal spirit residents say was embodied in the

woman they called “Aunt Mae.”

Grand nephew Cherry Jenkins remembers Eula Mae Ross, who died “around 10 years ago,” as tough. “She was 4’ 2”, but could outwork any man,” he contends. George W. Parker, or “Daddy Parker” as he is known locally, remembers meeting Aunt Mae when his family moved to town in 1937. “She asked



Above: Weeping Mary matriarch Bessie Mae Ross Parker has strong ties to the community’s agrarian past. Below: a THC untold stories marker was dedicated in 2009.

her son (about me), ‘Who is this boy?’ ” Parker recalls. “Then she said to me, ‘Let me tell you something—I’m the boss!’ ”

George is married to one of Weeping Mary’s current matriarchs—Aunt Mae’s second cousin once removed, Bessie Mae Ross Parker. Bessie Mae worked more than 40 years as a thrasher for the Texas Forest Service at the former Indian Mounds Nursery, now part of Caddo Mounds State Historic Site.

George fondly recalls using the old well tapped from one of several springs in the area. The springs were a major factor in Caddo Indian settlement, and they testify to the area’s long history of sustenance.

“It’s been a good community,” says George Parker. “We take care of our own. I wouldn’t want to live anywhere else.”

Weeping Mary is featured in the THC’s new website, [www.africanamericansintexas.com](http://www.africanamericansintexas.com), an online companion to the new travel booklet, *African Americans in Texas: A Lasting Legacy* (see “Let Freedom Ring” on page 6). ★

Article and photos by Rob Hodges of the THC’s Marketing Communications Division.



## ANNUAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION CONFERENCE

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• Online Registration Available in January •



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## Harris CHC Honors 19th-Century African American Leaders

The Harris County Historical Commission (CHC) recently held a marker dedication ceremony honoring two men who made significant contributions to Houston's African American community. The legacies of Rev. John Henry "Jack" Yates and John Sessums, Jr. were commemorated for future generations on a Texas Historical Commission (THC) marker and gravestone, respectively, in Houston's College Memorial Park Cemetery.

Randy Rieppe and Pastor Robert Robertson, members of the College Park Cemetery Association, officiated the ceremony. Yates descendant Jackie Bostic spoke about her great-grandfather, and Harris CHC member Ann Becker made remarks on Sessums. The men were further honored with official proclamations and resolutions from Texas Gov. Rick Perry, Sens. John Cornyn and Kay Bailey Hutchison, Congressman John Culberson, State Sen. Rodney Ellis, State Rep. Ellen Cohen, County Judge Ed Emmett, and Houston Mayor Anise Parker. Harris CHC Marker Dedication Chair Debra Blacklock-Sloan offered remarks about the symbolism and importance of African American cemeteries.

Yates was considered one of Houston's most influential 19th-century Fourth Ward leaders. Enslaved at birth in Gloucester, Virginia, Yates eventually migrated to Houston where he worked as a drayman and Baptist preacher, administering the rapid growth of membership and influence of Antioch Church until 1891. He encouraged other formerly enslaved blacks to purchase property by setting the example of becoming a homeowner within five years of his emancipation.



Sessums holds the rare honor of being the first and only African American drummer to serve in the Houston Light Guards, one of the oldest National Guard companies in Texas. The group became the first uniformed militia company in post-Reconstruction Houston, and Sessums earned distinction in the 1870s and 1880s for his significant role in the unit, which developed a proud reputation for superior skills in military drill.

## Texas Archeological Stewardship Network Receives Accolades

The Preserve America program honored a THC archeology program by designating it a 2010 Preserve America Steward. This designation, awarded in recognition of the Texas Archeological Stewardship Network (TASN), recognizes programs that have demonstrated a successful use of volunteer time and commitment to caring for the nation's heritage.

The TASN enlists the help of trained volunteers to monitor and interpret the vast archeological landscape of Texas. With nearly two million archeological sites throughout the Lone Star State, most on private lands, the THC relies heavily on these skilled volunteers to carry out digs, document artifacts, and help landowners obtain protective designations.

For more information about Preserve America or to view a list of other national Steward designations, visit [www.preserveamerica.gov](http://www.preserveamerica.gov). For more information about TASN, visit [www.thc.state.tx.us](http://www.thc.state.tx.us).

## Texas Society of Architects Honor Ray Bailey

The Texas Society of Architects (TSA) recently awarded distinguished architect Ray Bailey of Houston with the 2010 TSA Lifetime Achievement Medal. Bailey was honored for his 40 years of "leadership and dedication in architecture and community."

Bailey has been instrumental in several THC courthouse restorations (Bee, Jefferson, and Wharton counties) and received the THC's Award of Excellence in Historic Architecture. His wife Peggy is a trustee with the Friends of the Texas Historical Commission and the Baileys are Texas Heroes with the Friends.

Bailey founded Bailey Architects in 1975 and went on to serve as president of TSA, president of Houston's chapter of the American Institute of Architects, and is a founding president of the Houston Architecture Foundation. Bailey Architects specializes in award-winning historical preservation, renovation, library, educational, and liturgical architecture.

## Red River War Featured In New Online Brochure

Tumultuous battles, famous U.S. Army leaders, Native American warriors, and the plight of the buffalo all converge in the new THC online brochure *Red River War of 1874–1875: Clash of Cultures in the Texas Panhandle*. The brochure explores the conflict that erupted between the U.S. Army and Native Americans in the 1870s.

*Red River War of 1874–1875* highlights notable figures (including Gen. William T. Sherman and Comanche Chief Quanah Parker) and includes a map identifying 13 regional museums and heritage sites where visitors can view artifacts relating to the war. One of the most significant sites is Palo Duro Canyon State Park, which features an interpretive center outlining the war's most pivotal battle.

To download a copy of the online brochure visit [www.thc.state.tx.us](http://www.thc.state.tx.us). For more information on the Red River War contact the THC's Archeology Division at 512.463.6096. ★



## National Register News

The National Register of Historic Places is the country's official list of cultural resources deemed worthy of preservation, including more than 3,000 listings in Texas. Listing affords properties a measure of protection from the impact of federally funded projects, as well as access to technical expertise, tax credits, and grant funds to facilitate preservation. The following recently listed historic properties represent the real stories reflecting Texas' dynamic cultural heritage.



Photo courtesy of San Antonio Conservation Society

### Herrera Ranch—Von Ormy, Bexar Co.

The Blas Maria Herrera and Maria Antonia Ruiz Herrera Ranch is a rare early-19th century homestead in southern Bexar County, and has been in continuous ownership by Herrera family members since 1845. The complex represents early settlement by Tejano settlers. At the heart of the ranch stands a large jacal structure (pictured) that served as the family residence, a smaller jacal with an attached open-air pavilion, and three smaller wood-frame buildings. Historic built features throughout the ranch reflect the evolution and changing uses of the land, from active ranching, to scaled-back ranching activities, to social and community events, to the simple pasturing of horses today. The property is listed in the National Register at the state level of significance in the areas of Settlement and Ethnic Heritage: Hispanic.

### Westgate Tower—Austin, Travis Co.

The Westgate Tower—a 26-story mixed-use building containing commercial space, apartments, a parking garage, and originally a restaurant and social club—is named for its location adjoining the west edge of the Capitol grounds in downtown Austin. At 261 feet in height, the Westgate Tower was the tallest building constructed in Austin during the 1960s, although it deferred in height to the Capitol (311 feet) and the tower of the Main Building of the University of Texas at Austin (307 feet). The Westgate is listed in the National Register in the area of Community Planning and Development for its association with a wave of high-rise residential construction in Texas cities during the period 1962–66. Additionally, it is listed in the area of Architecture for its association with the architects Edward Durell Stone of New York and Fehr & Granger of Austin. The building's masonry solar screens embody the distinctive characteristics of Stone's mid-20th century modern architecture.



Photo courtesy of Rachel Leibowitz

Other recent National Register listings include Bexar County's **Krause House** and **Toltec Apartments** (both in San Antonio); Harris County's **Sylvan Beach Pavilion** (La Porte); Karnes County's **Karnes County Courthouse** (Karnes City); Tarrant County's **Vandergriff Building** (Arlington); and Travis County's **Chapman House** (Austin).

## Experience Preservation in Progress at Levi Jordan Plantation

The Levi Jordan Plantation's origins date to 1848, when Jordan, a planter, acquired more than 2,200 acres of land west of the San Bernard River in Brazoria County and relocated his family and his agricultural operation to Texas. After years of moving across the southeast in search of more fertile soil, family lore claims the Georgia-born Jordan reported finding an ideal piece of land that would outlast them all in the heart of the Texas Gulf Coast region near present-day Brazoria.

Upon taking possession of his land, Jordan left about a dozen enslaved workers there to begin construction of residences while he relocated his family. The main plantation house was a two-story, four-room, wood-frame Greek Revival style home. It was completed in the mid-1850s. The workers also built several slave quarters and a sugar mill.

Jordan raised sugarcane and cotton and made a shrewd investment in one of the largest sugar mill operations in the area. This mill processed his cane and the cane of several neighboring plantations. Over the 10-year period culminating with the end of the U.S. Civil War and Emancipation, Jordan owned as many as 140 enslaved workers, some Africans who were part of the illegal slave trade of the early 19th century.

Emancipation brought freedom to the enslaved workers at the Jordan Plantation, but also many new challenges. The Freedmen's Bureau office in Brazoria County reviewed several labor contract disputes between Jordan and his recently freed laborers. While the population of the former slave quarters area fluctuated during early Reconstruction, as many as 100 Africans and African Americans remained at the plantation.

Jordan died in 1873 and management of his agricultural empire fractured as it transitioned to his grandchildren's generation. By the late 1880s, the quarters area of the plantation was abandoned and over the next few decades the structures deteriorated and were dismantled for salvage. With time the structure foundations, tools, and personal items left behind by the former plantation inhabitants would become an archeological treasure trove of artifacts



*The mid-1850s main house at Levi Jordan Plantation is undergoing stabilization and is the focus of public programs at the site on the first Saturday of each month.*

related to the African American experience in 19th-century Texas.

From 1986 to 2002, Dr. Ken Brown of the University of Houston conducted extensive archeological investigations at the site. The investigations focused on the former slave quarters and areas around the plantation house. Numerous artifacts were recovered from the excavations that provided insights into the material culture, daily lives, and beliefs of the former slaves at the plantation.

The site is currently an example of "preservation in progress," with efforts underway to stabilize and restore the 1850s plantation home. Texas Historical Commission (THC) staff at the site have recently begun hosting public programs on the first Saturdays of each month.

"The complexities of preserving and developing facilities at the site will take time," says Brett Cruse, sites supervisor with the THC's Historic Sites Division. "For now, the community seems excited to be able to experience the site and learn about these efforts by seeing them first-hand." ★

*This article was written by Bryan McAuley, site manager of Levi Jordan Plantation.*

### Levi Jordan Plantation State Historic Site

7234 FM 521, Brazoria, TX • 979.798.2202  
www.visitlevijordanplantation.com

Note: The site is not open daily to the public during its current development planning phase. However, staffers open the site on the first Saturday of each month for interested guests. In addition, the site is open for reserved group tours of 10 or more. Be aware it is very rustic and lacks running water and modern restroom facilities.



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#### Our Mission

To protect and preserve the state's historic and prehistoric resources for the use, education, enjoyment and economic benefit of present and future generations.

## County Historical Commission TIPS & TOOLS



*The Bee CHC has partnered with the Lott Canada Alumni and Coastal Bend College to pursue markers and designations for the Lott Canada School in Beeville, a Rosenwald school built in the 1930s. It is currently used as a school for continuing education and provides a museum space dedicated to the history of the Lott Canada School.*

County Historical Commissions (CHC) are charged with developing and maintaining an inventory of surveyed properties in cooperation with the Texas Historical Commission (THC). As we enter the new year, we ask that CHCs prioritize updating their inventories to provide accurate location and condition information.

The THC is particularly interested in CHC assistance to update the statewide thematic inventory for Rosenwald schools. In the early 20th century, many public rural schools for African American children were dilapidated with few amenities. This drew the attention of Julius Rosenwald, the president of Sears, Roebuck and Co., who developed the Julius Rosenwald Fund. Active from 1912 through 1932, the Rosenwald Rural School Building Program provided almost 5,000 new schools in 15 states, including more than 500 in East Texas.

One of preservation's leading threats is the loss of our historic schools, even more so to African

American schools. Rosenwald schools carry a rich history in their association with community development and for their progressive plans that were designed to create a healthy learning environment.

CHCs can help celebrate the real places that tell the real stories of these important historic resources. Please check the inventory of Rosenwald schools currently on file with the THC and let us know which schools still exist in your county and the current condition of the properties.

More information about Rosenwald schools can be found on the THC website ([www.thc.state.tx.us](http://www.thc.state.tx.us)) or from the agency's National Register Coordinator Greg Smith. We also suggest referencing the multiple property National Register listing for Historic and Architectural Resources associated with the Rosenwald Rural School Building Program, or the National Trust for Historic Preservation publication *Preserving Rosenwald Schools*.



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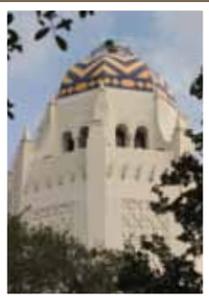


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## WHERE ON EARTH...IN TEXAS

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Want a clue? Located in a northern Texas community, this 1885 Renaissance Revival courthouse was rededicated in 2002 as part of the THC's Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program.

Answer to the photo from the last issue: The recognizable tower pictured above is the famous Taj Mahal (Building 100) at Randolph Air Force Base in San Antonio. A record number of readers (50 and counting) enthusiastically responded with the correct answer and shared many heartfelt memories of the traditions associated with the tower's patriotic broadcasts.

Congratulations to the first three readers who quickly submitted the correct answer: Alfred Broden of San Augustine, Bro. Edward Loch of San Antonio, and Tresa West of Brownfield. They will receive prizes from our Texas Heritage Trails Program as a token of our appreciation for taking part in the fun. Thanks to all participants!★

